

Colorado Springs Platte Avenue Corridor Study

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #2, Thursday, August 5th, 2021
Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose & Goals

- Review feedback collected thus far including comments received during the map-based exercise
- Share an update on technical analysis
- Review project teams draft functional objectives
- Preview upcoming character area workshops

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting facilitator, Angela Woolcott, K&W, welcomed attendees and provided opening remarks which included an overview of meeting participation guidelines and sharing the meeting purpose and goals listed above. The primary purpose of the meeting was to share an update on what the project team has heard from public involvement efforts as well as updates on the technical analysis of the project.

Angela introduced the project team and outlined the meeting agenda. The full list of project team members as well as CAC members who were in attendance are included at the end of the meeting summary. The meeting was broken into four segments which include (1) a project overview and review of where we are in the process, (2) a review of public input and feedback received to date, (3) a preview of the draft functional objectives that will be used to define future alternatives, and (4) a preview of the character area workshops that were scheduled to take place in two weeks. After each section, the project team hosted a short Q&A to allow CAC members to respond, ask questions, and share their thoughts.

At the onset of the meeting, Angela reminded the Platte Avenue Community Advisory Committee (CAC) of their roles and responsibilities; these include:

- Acting as a representative of the community and helping to vet information
- Sharing the perspectives of their organization rather than their individual interests
- Being available to participate in the entire process from beginning to end
- Bringing concerns from the community back to the group and the project team
- Staying engaged between meetings and project milestones by participating in public involvement activities and reviewing information the project team shares in between CAC meetings
- Serving as a project partner and a steward in the community by sharing accurate and timely information with the broader public and constituents

Project Overview

Ted Ritschard, Olsson, provided a project overview to orient CAC members and ensure everyone is starting with the same level of knowledge regarding the [Platte Avenue Corridor Study](#). The Platte Avenue Corridor study is connected to and is a pilot corridor project of [ConnectCOS](#), which is the 20-year transportation master plan for the City of Colorado Springs. Platte Avenue was identified early in the ConnectCOS process as a critical city corridor, whose study area runs from 1-25 to Powers Boulevard.

Ted explained that as part of the technical analysis, the study area has been divided into four character areas: (1) Downtown, (2) Middle Shooks Run, (3) Knob Hill, (4) and Eastern Reaches. The function of one character area influences the function and performance of the adjacent character areas. The project team recognizes that character areas do not have distinct street borders but rather transition zones from one area to the next making one continuous corridor. When considering investments in each of these distinct character areas, we have to consider investments for the entire corridor and study area.

How do we define a corridor? A corridor includes the major roadway and also any adjacent roadways or networks that exist such as trail and transit routes as well as the context of adjacent neighborhoods.

Ted then discussed the importance of connecting the Platte Avenue Corridor Study to the goal framework for ConnectCOS. Based on stakeholder and public input, as well as previous planning processes, ConnectCOS strives to identify transportation and mobility improvements based on six primary goal areas: safe, equitable, sustainable, efficiently reliable, accessible, and connected. The goal framework helps define what alternatives developed should address. By assessing the current system's progress, we can better understand where the current needs are as well as identifying actions that generate a high return in performance improvement or things that would make a significant difference in each of these goal areas.

Ted then reviewed the timeline for the project and noted that the project team is moving into the phase of developing initial strategies for the corridor that will then become recommended projects. Regarding the Platte Avenue Corridor Study process, the project team is narrowing in on the transition point between needs and solutions. Towards the end of 2021, the project team will produce a draft of the final plan document for the Platte Avenue Corridor.

Public Meeting Feedback & Map-Based Survey Results

Angela Woolcott, K&W, reviewed recent feedback from public engagement activities, the first of which included a virtual public meeting held in early June 2021. During that meeting, the project team asked a series of questions to learn more about the community's preferences and travel patterns along Platte Avenue. Angela showed a high-level summary of the results of that activity. To read a detailed review of the activity and the results, please see the [Platte Avenue Corridor Study Virtual Public Meeting Summary](https://coloradosprings.gov/project/platte-avenue-corridor-study) on the project website (<https://coloradosprings.gov/project/platte-avenue-corridor-study>).

Next, Angela turned the presentation over to Kelly Leadbetter, FHU, to review the results and public feedback collected from Social Pinpoint. Social Pinpoint is a map-based tool that was recently available on the project website for public engagement and to collect public input on the project from approximately June 6th to July 14th.

The online mapping tool prompted participants to identify what they appreciate, or thought was working well along the corridor, as well as current concerns and perceived challenges. Responses were organized into five possible categories that respondents were asked to select, including community, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and vehicular. The project team received 100 unique comments using the tool, as well as an additional 154 "up votes" to existing public feedback either affirming or agreeing with those comments.

Kelly shared additional observations regarding the Social Pinpoint public results which are being used to inform the corridor analysis. The majority of responses were shared in relation to the West-end of the project area. She then went through each character area to summarize the results.

Social Pinpoint results relating to the Downtown area:

- There are roughly 20 comments received for this area.
- Some comments include the General Palmer Statue and how to better manage this intersection,
- as well as the function of Platte Avenue in the Downtown area and its lack of connectivity to 1-25.

Middle Shook's Run area:

- Many respondents appreciate the existing medians for the mature trees and shade they provide,

- and there are continuing concerns about the lack of connectivity and excess of traffic and traffic-related noise;
- comments also include an interest in slowing speeds in this area.

Knob Hill:

- The area near Citadel Mall includes many comments regarding safety and functionality of intersections,
- specifically concerns about the barriers and lack of safe crossings along Platte Avenue.
- Comments also focused on an appreciation for the arts and preservation of an art district.

Eastern Reaches:

- Lastly, the Eastern Reaches area include less comments from the public,
- but certainly an acknowledgement and emphasis on existing challenges around the frontage roads.
- Comments also emphasize the regional nature of Platte Avenue and the regional connection it provides between the airport and other major destinations.

Kelly opened the conversation to the group to share additional observations from the map-based tool. Comments shared by CAC members include:

- There is not a one-size-fits-all solution for the corridor, especially due to the diversity of the neighborhoods located along and adjacent to the corridor.
- Platte Avenue intersects some fairly busy North/ South corridors that we should be mindful of when considering traffic flow and connectivity.
- The quick transition from commercial to residential can be a challenge and a safety concern.
- There is interest in adding some amount of capacity through the adjacent neighborhoods for alternate travel, but this is also in conflict with some neighborhood interests.

Technical Analysis Update

Next, Ted Ritschard, Olsson, gave an update on the technical analysis underway. He began by discussing the integrated planning process between [PlanCOS](#), [ConnectCOS](#), and the [Platte Avenue Corridor Study](#). The City strives to enhance overall city planning processes by making them more integrated and mutually supportive while increasing transparency which builds trust with the public. Additionally, the project team wants to target investments that move us closer to our goals, and a primary goal of the technical analysis is to analyze how to meet the ConnectCOS goal framework discussed earlier in this summary.

Ted summarized the needs assessment conducted for Platte Avenue as it relates to each goal area within the ConnectCOS goal framework. What follows is a list of challenges and/or needs of Platte Avenue for each goal area.

- **Safe:** concentrations of bike and pedestrian related crashes; crash concentrations at intersections; driveway/pedestrian conflicts; personal safety for transit users
- **Equitable:** significant populations with social or mobility needs; missing sidewalk connections; lack of bike and pedestrian crossings; transit access to businesses; lack of housing/retail
- **Sustainable:** QOZ, EOZ, and enterprise zone designations; age of housing / lack of economic investment; street trees and access to greenspace; affordable housing, do mobility options support sustainability
- **Efficiently reliable:** traffic expected to grow over 12% by 2045; several intersections are failing or near failing to hold the current traffic volumes and will be worse in the future; existing

corridor right of way is fully allocated – how to add capacity; specific bridges / structures need significant repair or replacement; sidewalk condition / missing sidewalk creates barriers

- **Accessible:** missing sidewalks and poor condition; lack of pedestrian crossings and ADA compliance; need for transit connection facilities and wayfinding; transit accessible businesses; comfortable North/South bike and pedestrian crossings
- **Connected:** mobility and land use incompatibilities; neighborhood barrier with lack of crossings; lack of investment in the area; need for better transitions between different character areas

Functional Objectives

Ted Ritschard then led the portion of the presentation and discussion answering the question: “What is the function of Platte Avenue?”. Functional objectives provide guidance to the project team regarding where they should expend energy or effort in developing alternatives and transportation investments that can achieve these objectives. Below is a draft list of functional objectives for Platte Avenue that the project team is seeking public input on through conversations with the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC), Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and the general public. The input is received through EOC and CAC committee meetings as well as a series of upcoming community workshops.

The purpose of refining the functional objectives for Platte Avenue is three-fold:

- 1) To translate the ConnectCOS Goals to the needs and context of Platte Avenue
- 2) To describe the key elements of a high performing Platte Avenue, also known as the function of Platte Avenue
- 3) To describe the conditions where efforts should be directed for specific outcomes, also known as the objectives of Platte Avenue

The following functional objectives for Platte Avenue are in draft form as they are still undergoing revisions based on public input. They are as follows.

The Platte Avenue Corridor should...

- 1) *Maintain/enhance east west connectivity and capacity for current and future traffic as the primary function of the Platte Avenue corridor. Consider travel times, network connectivity, and activity centers that are served.*
- 2) *Support the fact that Downtown is a destination – while through traffic between I-25 and eastern reaches of Platte is significant, the character of the corridor in Downtown should not change focus to facilitate these through movements of traffic.*
- 3) *Establish a more consistent identity for the corridor while integrating and enhancing the different character areas and the transitions between.*
- 4) *Enhance the travel experience of the corridor to create an ‘Avenue’ that visually connects the length of the corridor and creates context specific placemaking opportunities.*
- 5) *Investments in the corridor should reflect the significant opportunity presented by Platte Ave to positively impact Citywide economic and equity goals.*
- 6) *Provide multiple travel modes within the corridor with comparative levels of efficiency and safety.*

Preview of Character Area Workshops

Angela Woolcott, K&W, then shared information about the upcoming Platte Avenue Corridor Study character area specific workshops. In opening the conversation, she emphasized that while the project team would like to host the workshops in person, they have made the decision to transition all scheduled workshops to take place virtually in order to prioritize the public safety of everyone involved. However, if CAC members or any member of the public would like to meet one-on-one with a project team member to share their ideas or concerns, then this is a possibility. For anyone who is unable to attend a virtual workshop, the outcomes of the workshops will be summarized and packaged with relevant materials and posted to the project webpage.

Angela gave an overview of the workshop goals and activities; the community workshops will...

1. Provide information on the project corridor existing conditions.
2. Allow participants to experience the segment through a virtual "tour" to better understand existing functionality, issues and opportunities in-person.
3. Explore and capture community interests and feedback.
4. Empower participants to act as a resource and source for information for other community members for the study.
5. Celebrate culture and identity that varies across the four character areas by helping identify the elements that make each character area unique and tailor solutions in response.

The community workshop activities are identical for all workshops, though they focus on a specified character area. Using PowerPoint, Poll Everywhere, drone video of the study area, and interactive activities in Miro, the project team expects an engaging workshop experience for all participants. Miro is a highly interactive virtual engagement tool that the project team will use for a series of virtual exercises during the workshop. Information on how to use Miro will be shared with participants in advance of the meeting.

The schedule for the upcoming workshops is as follows:

Monday, August 16th

Area 3 & 4 Workshop

Eastern and East Central. This portion of the study area includes Platte Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods between Union Boulevard and Chelton Road. This segment includes Knob Hill Arts District, Citadel Mall, and Academy Boulevard.

Workshop time: 3 pm – 5 pm

Tuesday, August 17th

Area 1 Workshop

Downtown. This area includes Platte Avenue and the surrounding businesses between I-25 and Wahsatch Avenue.

Workshop time: 4 pm – 6 pm

Wednesday, August 18th

Area 2 Workshop

West Central. This area includes Platte Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods between Wahsatch and Union Boulevard. This segment includes Middle Shooks Run.

Workshop time: 3 pm – 5 pm

Next Steps

In closing, Dan Krueger, project manager, City of Colorado Springs, reiterated the need to have virtual public meetings due to growing concerns around the delta variant COVID-19, despite interest from the project team to meet with stakeholders and the public in small group or one-on-one meetings. He raised

awareness that holding virtual meetings can be a barrier to receiving project input, but the project team will do their best to ensure everyone has an opportunity to be engaged in the process.

Angela Woolcott, K&W, closed the meeting by reminding everyone that as we head into the next phase of the project, the discussions around balancing the needs and interests of everyone involved will become a critical part of the conversation. It is important that everyone continue to stay involved. CAC members were then encouraged to email the project team (Info@platteavestudy.com) or call the team with additional comments or questions.

Participants

Project Team Attendees

Ted Ritschard	Olsson
Kelly Leadbetter	FHU
Eric Gunderson	Kimley Horn
Amy Garinger	Kimley Horn
Kyle McLaughlin	Kimley Horn
Marianne Stuck	Design Workshop
Anna Laybourn	Design Workshop
Zach Barr	Kearns & West
Angela Woolcott	Kearns & West
Sarah Franklin	Kearns & West
Aaron Egbert	City of Colorado Springs
Dan Krueger	City of Colorado Springs

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Roster

Nicole Odell	Bike Colorado Springs
Chelsea Gondeck	Downtown Partnership
Mark Hopewell	Active Transportation Advisory Committee
Allen Beauchamp	Trails and Open Space Coalition
Jim Godfrey	Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority
Tim Seibert	Norwood
Karen Palus	Parks, Rec and Cultural Services
Pat Rigdon	COS Police Department
Rachel Beck	Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC
William Harrell	Citizen Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB)
Scott Lee	COS Parking Enterprise
Paul Spotts	The Independence Center & Community Transit Coalition
Nancy Henjum	City Council (District 5)
Ann Werner	PPACG DoD Liaison
Brett Lacey	COS Fire Department
Kate Brady	COS Planning/Bicycle
Rodney Gullatte	Black Business Network
Terry Johns	School District 11 Facilities
Ben Anderson	Solid Rock Community Development Corporation
Eric Becker	Platte Ave (in Knob Hill) Special Improvement Maintenance District
Stephanie Johnson	Platte Avenue Business & Neighborhood Association
Jeff Peterson	YMCA
Shane Ferguson	CDOT
Richard Mulledy	COS: Stormwater Enterprise Manager
Elena Nunez	Colorado Springs Utilities